What Is Claimed Is:

1. A fault tolerant director switch comprising:

at least two input/output boards, each having at least one port;

at least two fabric switch boards for providing switched connections, one of which is adapated to function as a spare fabric switch board; and

a redundant command and control interface for said switch comprising at least two control modules.

2. A switch of Claim 1 further comprising a backplane multiplexed with said input/output boards such that each input or output board includes a redundant back link path through said backplane to said spare fabric switch board.

3. A switch of Claim 1, further comprising at least two fan modules, each of said fan modules being functionally equivalent with each other so as to permit universal replacement thereof.

4. A switch of Claim 1, wherein there are from 2 to 16 input/output boards, forming from 1 to 8 input/output modules, each input/output module comprising protocol engine chips, a local processor and any necessary interface ports.

5. A switch of Claim 1, wherein there are from 2 to 5 fabric switch boards, each fabric switch board comprising protocol engine chips, a local process and any necessary interface port components.

6. A switch according to Claim 1, wherein said control modules each comprise microprocessing capability and ethernet connectivity.

plural jumper plugs, each jumper plug connected between chassis backplanes for providing interconnections between input/output boards of one of the plural chassis and fabric switch boards of another of the plural chassis

7. A switch of Claim 6 wherein said spare fabric switch board is a redundant fabric switch board for replacing a failed or degraded fabric switch board and wherein one or more jumper plugs connect the redundant fabric switch board to input/output boards.

8. A switch according to Claim 1, further comprising two power modules arranged in redundant configuration.

9. A method for providing fault tolerance in a director switch comprising:

providing FIO modules that are connected through a backplane through at least one fabric switch board by backlink paths, wherein two backlink paths are provided from each FIO to each fabric switch board;

in the event of failure detected by said switch, redirecting any failed backlink path to a spare fabric switch board.